GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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Contents for Week of December 17, 1934. Vol. XIII. No. 24.

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NOTE TO TEACHERS.—Owing to the Christmas and the New Year's holidays the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS will not be published during the next two weeks. The BULLETINS will be resumed Monday, January 7, 1935.

Photograph by Kiyoshi Sakamoto

IN A JAPANESE BRANCH OF SANTA'S WORKSHOPS

Both Japan and China supply thousands of dolls and other toys for the Christmas markets of the world. Japanese girls, however, look forward to the third day of the third month, when the "Feast of Dolls" permits them to play with dolls representing their Emperor and Empress, (see Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Toys: From Egyptian Rag Dolls to Streamline Trains

EVEN toys have gone streamline. When Santa Claus visits the modern child this year, he will bring streamline trains, autos, airplanes and other playthings which reflect the trend of the times.

Toys, most of them miniature images of actual articles used in the adult world, all through the ages have mirrored current life. The Egyptian child was content with a crude figure whose arms moved to knead bread. The 1934 child demands sleek trains, tricycles with V-shaped handlebars, and even roller skates with wheels protected by streamline fenders.

Toy washboards and wooden tubs were popular not long ago. To-day, laundry-minded little girls demand miniature electric washing machines. Small Egyptians cuddled the first rag dolls: rough shapes of linen stuffed with papyrus grown on the Nile banks. Nothing less than lifelike reproductions of quintuplets satisfy "little mothers" to-day. Even educational toys have gone modern. Blocks have windows indicated on them so that tiny fingers may build apartment houses. With steel construction sets boy engineers may duplicate the bridges, engines, looms and other mechanical wonders of the age.

Toys of Three Types

To determine what types of toys are preferred by children, and to evolve new ones, toy makers meet annually in New York, Leipzig, and other toy centers. Very young children prefer simple, bright red toys. School children show a preference for blue ones. Toy makers must constantly invent new toys, dress old ones in new disguises, or pack them in different cartons to attract buyers. Although few toys, except staples, are in demand longer than five years, some, after a lapse in popularity, stage a comeback. Witness the revival of ping-pong.

To be in demand, toys should be educational, full of action, or duplicates of large articles. All toys used through the ages fall into one of these three categories.

To-day's educational toys, such as ABC blocks, bead-counting racks, map games, and "Authors," find their prototypes in the playing cards of France and Italy produced in the 17th and 18th centuries, which were designed to teach children heraldry, history, and geography. London children of that period received card games teaching them rules of grammar, arithmetic, or religion.

Toy Windmill Made of Gold

Such toys are usually bought by adults. If left to themselves, children select different kinds. Noisy toys, such as drums, whistles, and rattles are among the most treasured playthings all over the world. Children in ancient Athens rolled hoops to which were attached jangling metal disks. Today young Japan and India beat drums and shake tambourines. The Lapp mother hangs silver bells on the hood of her baby's cradle.

The urge to ride or drive, push or pull articles, or other children around in wagons, is strong in children. Just as the modern youngster pedals up and down the sidewalk in a miniature airplane, so early Greek boys delighted in dragging along their two-wheeled clay carts, and the son of the first Napoleon enjoyed riding in his tiny carriage drawn by white lambs.

Toys of action are always favorites. Egyptian boys threw balls of reed, leather, or wood. Young Athenians had swings, whipping tops, and threw knucklebones, similar to our jackstones. Roman children also spun tops, and caught balls stuffed with feathers or fig seeds. A pearl-studded, gold toy windmill was given in 1390 to Isabella of Bavaria.

The recent Yo-Yo craze, and jigsaw puzzle fad, were duplicated in the 18th century in France when everyone, man, woman, or child, played with pasteboard figures called Pantins.

Toy Soldiers Made of Silver

Mechanical toys are not new. The early Greeks had them. They were favorites of Louis XIV, and broke the monotony for women in the harems of Arabia. In the 17th and 18th centuries, when all moving toys were extremely complicated, those of Nuremberg became world-famous.

The 1934 child chooses from a bewildering selection of talking dolls, music boxes, boats and engines, toys worked by the pouring of sand or water, planes that fly by elastic, and electric trains speeding around circles of track.

Many children, however, don't want "toys that play with me," but "toys I can play with." One little girl, taken through a toy department by a rich man, and offered anything she selected, scorned the $100 mechanical dolls, and chose a 35-cent stuffed squirrel. Among the oldest

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Photo by F. Soler

CHAINS OF BOYS PASS DOWN THE DATE HARVEST

The top man lowers the heavy cluster by its stem to the fellow just beneath, and it is passed from hand to hand until it reaches the ground. Note the small orange trees growing in the shade of the palms. This photograph was taken in the ancient date gardens of the Jerid, an oasis in the Sahara southwest of Tunis (see Bulletin No. 3).

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Etah, Nearest to "Santa Claus Land"

ONE group of explorers will spend Christmas nearer to the North Pole, the traditional home and workshop of Santa Claus, than perhaps any other persons on earth.

A wireless message has been received from the Oxford University Expedition to Greenland, led by Edward Shackleton, son of the late Sir Ernest Shackleton, stating that winter quarters have been established at Etah, on Smith Sound, along the bleak and lonely northwestern coast of Greenland.

Later in the winter the expedition expects to push north over the ice of Smith Sound to Grant Land, the little-known northern portion of Ellesmere Island. The chief object of the expedition is to make the first sledge journey across one of the glaciers of the United States range, mighty mountains whose rugged slopes form the southern boundary of Grant Land.

Most Northerly Settlement

Although Etah is known as the most northerly "settlement" in the world, its population is unstable.

Tupik and igloo (summer tent and winter rock or snow house) are not always in the same location. The Eskimo, still a hunter, moves his dwelling to sea or hill, according to whether he is pursuing the savage walrus, or searching his stone or metal traps for blue foxes or other game.

Akkomidingwa, the dean of Etah society, by living both summer and winter in a rock igloo at the inner break of the Etah Harbor, for many years enabled Etah to maintain its place on the map. When other expeditions called at Etah and there was work to be done, this old Eskimo chose for himself a convenient viewpoint and restricted his heavy labor to overseeing the job of paring a new back plaster, whose presence was proclaimed only by his peculiar stoop.

Akkomidingwa came to be known to the members of the Byrd-MacMillan Arctic Expedition in 1925 as Old-Crick-in-the-Back. He was father of the tribe's best hunter, Kookapingwa. The old man reserved for himself a sitting-out job and had taken into his home as partner and helpmate a seventeen-year-old girl whose industry was as unnoticeable as his own. As an eater, Akkomidingwa was without a peer among the Smith Sound Eskimos and he was as regular with his meals as there were meals.

Akkomidingwa was as clever as any of his juniors and had a real sense of humor. His head not only served his feet and his stomach, but contained a craftiness that he was ready to place at the disposal of his friends. When a visiting explorer wanted a section of walrus tusk made into a gavel head bearing the insignia of his lodge, Akkomidingwa was the one who could do the job.

Home of the Glaucous Gull

High above the rock cliffs where the black and white dovekies chatter and swarm like bees, sits the hypocrite of Etah birddom, the glaucous gull, whose superior air and haughty demeanor have won him the title of burgomaster.

The glaucous gull's pure white vest and coat of lightest gray, his high flying manners and his comparative silence make him superior among the sociable, flighty and noisy little auks, or dovekies. Yet the glaucous gull is a voracious

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toys are a limestone pig and a lion on a stand found in Susa, Persia, showing that animals have always appealed to children. Mickey Mouse, and the Three Little Pigs find a ready sale to-day.

Children like replicas of articles used in adult life. Miniature tool chests, and geology sets with microscope and rock samples, catch the eyes of boys. Girls are entranced by kitchen cabinets, stocked with tiny groceries, or doll houses complete from cellar to attic.

Doll Is Most Popular Toy

No replica is more popular than the doll. Young Greeks mothered dolls of terra cotta, bone or wood. Roman dolls of wood had moveable arms and legs attached by strings. Indians possess dolls made of gourds, corn husks, or beaded deerskin, while Eskimos have dolls dressed in fur. Dolls with moveable heads and eyes were familiar in France in the early 18th century. As a girl, Queen Victoria cherished 132 wooden dolls, 32 of which she dressed herself to represent court ladies and actresses.

Queen Mary's Doll House has tiny portraits and leather bound books. Equally impressive are the doll house furnishings made for wealthy European children of the 17th and 18th centuries, when not only the knives, forks, and tea sets, but the furniture and dolls as well were made all of silver. These were designed, not by toymakers, but by famous silversmiths in Holland, Paris, London, and Frankfort. One of the Dauphins (heirs to the French throne) had an entire army of silver soldiers.

Toy soldiers and facsimiles of military weapons have been the playthings of boys from remote times. As mother-worrying as the models of machine guns and barbed wire entrenchments given modern boys, are the models of the Bastille and the guillotine, with which young Parisians once played.

Note: For additional pictures of toys and toymakers consult the following in your school or local library: "Ohio, the Gateway State," *National Geographic Magazine*, May, 1932; "New Hampshire, the Granite State," September, 1931; "Norway, a Land of Stern Reality" and "North America's Oldest Metropolis (Mexico D. F.)," July, 1930; "Some Impressions of 150,000 Miles of Travel," May, 1930; "Renascent Germany," December, 1928; "Michigan, Mistress of the Lakes," March, 1928; "Rainbow Portraits of Portugal," November, 1927; "New China and the Printed Page," June, 1927; "The Heart of Aymará Land," February, 1927; "Streets and Palaces of Colorful India," July, 1926; "The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg," November, 1924; "Sakurajima, Japan's Greatest Volcanic Eruption," April, 1924; "The Geography of Our Foreign Trade," January, 1922; and "'The Man in the Street' in China," November, 1920.

Bulletin No. 1, December 17, 1934.

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WOOD HAS BEEN USED BY TOYMAKERS FOR AGES

More than 400 kinds of wooden toys are displayed in this cheery shop at South Tamworth, New Hampshire. Most of them are fashioned from the State's native white pine and hardwoods. The dog sled (center) was taken on the First Byrd Antarctic Expedition.

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The Date—One of the World's Oldest Foods

PERHAPS our only food link with the first Christmas is the date, and most of the supply of this delicious sweetmeat gracing Christmas feasts in northern countries to-day still comes from the date groves of the Near East (see illustration, next page).

A recent news item described a spirited race of rival date ships from Iraq through the Mediterranean and across the Atlantic to obtain premium prices for the season's first dates. This annual 10,000-mile contest, dating (no pun) from 1899, recalls the tea-clipper races of the last century.

Christmas feasters who eat dates chiefly as sweets, dessert, or in puddings and cakes, probably do not realize that dates have been raised and prized for ages untold as one of the most nourishing, satisfying foods in the world. Records show that dates have been raised as food on the banks of the Euphrates for more than 4,000 years.

Date Palms "Can Take It!"

Persians, Arabians, and North Africans eat them as we eat potatoes. They are the chief source of wealth and the staple article of food in Arabia. Give a desert nomad a few boiled beans, a little olive oil, milk, and some dates, and he considers it a feast. In the dry parts of North Africa, dates constitute not only the main food of the inhabitants, but are consumed by dogs, horses and camels.

Deserts would be totally unpopulated were it not for camels and dates. The date palm is a stoic among trees, living on salty land that kills other vegetation. Sometimes appearing half buried in sand, it reaches down for alkaline water and thrives. Some date palms blossom and bear in the hottest regions of the globe, while others endure where the mercury falls to 12° F.

The date palm has never heard of the NRA, "overproduction," or child labor. From about its sixth year until sometimes past its hundredth, it bears great clusters of dates, totalling between 100 and 400 pounds annually. A single bunch often weighs as much as 40 pounds and has to be straddled across a leaf of the palm to prevent it from breaking off because of its own weight. An acre planted with date palms will keep more people from starvation than an acre planted with anything else except plantain.

This high output, however, is made possible only by artificial pollination. Male and female flowers appear on separate date palms. Over 90 per cent of male palms, which have sparser foliage and do not bear fruit, are weeded out to make way for fruit-bearing trees; one pollen-bearing tree usually is surrounded by 25 to 100 fruit trees. Wind pollination being too haphazard, it is not unusual to see Arabs climbing the trees to fasten with palm-leaf fibers a spray of waxy-white, pollen-bearing flowers on each greenish cluster of potential fruit. If followed by a sudden rain, this process has to be repeated.

Furnishes Wood of Desert

Date palms grow usually between 60 and 80 feet high. Their feathery green fronds waving against a hot blue sky bring cheer to desert caravans traveling a waste of sand, assuring them food, shade and usually a near-by bubbling spring. People whose sole encounter with dates is meeting them dried, dark, and compressed together in sticky packages, hardly realize the beauty of dates on the tree, when sunset turns the clusters of yellow or red fruit to scarlet, their stems to gold.

In harvest time, boys with sickles scamper up the tall trunks, and sever the stems. Dates of inferior quality are tossed carelessly below to be caught on a sheet. The best are passed down the palm trunk from hand to hand, often by as many as eight boys who have climbed up one behind another (see illustration, page 2). Once sorted, the best dates are usually sent by camels, then by barges down rivers to the seacoast for shipment. The rest are consumed or packed in skins or tins. Some varieties keep indefinitely.

What the birch is to the Siberian, and the bamboo to the tropic-dweller, the date palm is to the North African. Not only is the ripe fruit eaten uncooked, cooked, or pounded into a paste with locusts and other foodstuffs but from mashed dates, steeped in water or milk, various drinks are concocted. When old date palms cease bearing, a toddy is drawn from cuts made in the trunks. The trunks provide posts and furniture for North African huts; the leaves, thatch. Packing cases for transporting the fruit are also made from the leaves. The bark supplies fiber for rope, sacks, and matting baskets. The leafstalks are used as fuel.

In other parts of the world, dates are put to still other uses. Date palms are grown as

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thief, who, like the Eskimo, or the infrequent explorer, will rob an eider duck of her young or her eggs.

The glaucous gull arrives at Etah a week or so ahead of the little auk army and makes his home on some inaccessible point of rock high above the little auk nests. Although he hesitates to attack them when they are in numbers, he can catch an individual bird in midair, swallow it whole, digest its meat in his lower throat and disgorge the head, feet, feathers and wings.

The glaucous gull can make headway into the wind without seeming to move a muscle, stop dead as though equipped with four-wheel brakes, and bank a turn with the best acrobats of the air. While the more common tern bounces along with each wing stroke the glaucous gull of the Arctic has steadiness and grace that is unexcelled.

The young gull is a prize boob. He squawks like an ill-mannered child, gabbles about himself and seems to be afflicted with dizziness whenever he looks off the lofty pinnacle which his parents have chosen as his jumping off place in life. When full feathered and ready for flight, even, the young gulls are so stupid and slow that repeatedly they have been photographed at arm's length.

Not far south of Etah, on the summit of the rocky heights of Cape York, stands a towering shaft of stone marked with a large white letter "P." This is the Peary Memorial, erected and dedicated in the summer of 1932. The triangular pile, 60 feet high, is clearly visible to all mariners sailing the lonely reaches of upper Baffin Bay.

Note: Students interested in Greenland should also consult: "Flying Around the North Atlantic," *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1934; "A Naturalist with MacMillan in the Arctic," March, 1926; "The MacMillan Arctic Expedition Returns," November, 1925; "Flying over the Arctic," November, 1925; and "The *'Bowdoin'* in North Greenland," June, 1925. See also "Map of the Arctic Regions," published as a free supplement to the August, 1927, *National Geographic Magazine*.

Bulletin No. 2, December 17, 1934.

Photograph by Donald B. MacMillan

EIDER DUCK EGGS FOR ETAH'S CHRISTMAS FEAST

During brief summer months natives of Greenland's barren west coast gather thousands of these nourishing eggs from nests perched high on rocky cliffs. The cold climate preserves them for winter use.

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Tiberias, a Biblical City "Gone Modern"

IF CHRISTMAS turns your thoughts to the Holy Lands, and shepherds, flowing costumes, drowsy villages, and still waters of Biblical days, you should make room in your thoughts also for garage mechanics, high heels, subdivisions, and hydroelectric power plants. Palestine, the home of Christmas, has all of these familiar aspects of the machine age, although they are often found side by side with age-old costumes, customs, and settings.

The slow penetration of modern ideas, however, continues unchecked throughout the "unchanging East," and to-day we find many once-remote cities and villages greatly altered by the influx of western residents and western ways of doing things.

One of the latest to bow to outside influences is the ancient Biblical town of Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee. Present-day Tiberias has about 9,000 inhabitants. A few are Moslems and Christians, but most of them are Jews in all stages of culture, from ragged fishermen to wealthy Zionists from Germany, Soviet Russia, and Poland.

New Tiberias, Along the Road to Nazareth

Outside the dusty ruined walls of old Tiberias, a new Tiberias of modern pink and white villas is spreading along the storied road to Nazareth. Other subdivisions climb from the blue-green waters of the Sea of Galilee (really a lake) to the northwest.

Like many others of its Palestinian neighbors, Tiberias has an electric power plant, banks, hotels, bus station, and telephone and telegraph offices. In addition to its mosques and synagogues there is a Scottish mission. Women in red and yellow draperies still throng through oval doors in the sea wall to bathe, wash food or clothes, and draw drinking water. But they carry the water home in oil cans instead of earthen pitchers; and into each tin a health official pours a few drops of an antiseptic!

On the fine white military road leading from Tiberias to Jerusalem, loose-robed townsfolk on foot, Bedouins on tassled horses, and laden camels and donkeys all make way for automobiles. As they speed past, one catches glimpses of bearded Jewish patriarchs, English officers in pith helmets, and Arabs with white cloth headgear blowing in the wind. Overhead an airplane flashes silver in the sun.

Many Reminders of Biblical Times

Despite oil tins and speed-limit signs, however, Tiberias retains much of the placid charm and the picturesque appearance of Biblical times. Down the hills around the town flow small creeks where frogs croak and iridescent-winged dragon flies alight on papyrus plants. Infant Samuels wade among the reeds and pebbles to catch tiny pale tortoises. A caravan of donkeys plods along the sand. A young flute-playing Bedouin leads his cattle down to water.

Scene of the "miraculous draught of fishes," the Sea of Galilee still teems with fish. Among its queer denizens is a socalled catfish which can live for several days out of water, and which mews like a kitten. Many residents of Tiberias still make their living by fishing. One sees sunbrowned fishermen resembling the Apostles, mending their nets spread to dry on the black walls of the old Crusaders' Castle (see illustration, next page); or casting them far out on the sea. When the blue-

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ornamental trees in California, Florida, and Bermuda. Their leaves are used by Christians on Palm Sunday, and by Jews celebrating the Passover. Dates are not only eaten as such, but are made into jams, jellies, date butter, and vinegar. Date sugar, obtained from the sap of a closely-related species, is an important commercial product in the East Indies. Date-palm meal is obtained from the stem of another related species growing in southern India.

Iraq furnishes almost 95 per cent of the dates imported into the United States. In 1933, the United States imported 47,492,841 pounds of Iraq dates. About 30,000,000 of these were shipped direct from that country, the rest transshipped through several countries of Europe. The United States imports small quantities of dates from Arabia, Algeria, Persia, and Turkey, and also grows dates in the Southwest, particularly in the Coachella and Imperial valleys of Southern California, and the lower Salt and Gila river valleys of Arizona.

In these American date gardens grow over a hundred varieties of dates. Some are used chiefly for cooking, others for eating. Some are dry, not sticky, while others "candy" on the tree. Preferred are the Ascherasi variety, probably the best dry date and the Deglet Nour, a very sweet, soft, melting date.

Note: For other references to dates and date-raising regions see: "Into Burning Hadhramaut," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1932; "Raft Life on the Hwang Ho," June, 1932; "New Light on Ancient Ur," January, 1930; "On the Bypaths of Spain," March, 1929; "Arizona Comes of Age," January, 1929; "The White City of Algiers," February, 1928; "Tripolitania, Where Rome Resumes Sway," August, 1925; "Crossing the Untraversed Libya Desert," September, 1924; and "Peoples and Places of Northern Africa," October, 1922.

Bulletin No. 3, December 17, 1934.

Photograph through courtesy of the British Museum and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania

REED MATS PROTECT A DATE PALM GROVE IN IRAQ

The Biblical setting for "the Garden of Eden" and "Daniel in the Lion's Den" is still the world's chief source of dates. But to-day, as in ages past, the Tigris and the Euphrates, the two great rivers of Iraq (Mesopotamia), often overflow their banks.

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Poinsettia, America's Christmas Flower

BECAUSE its red and green are Christmas colors, and because it generally blossoms around Christmas time, the poinsettia has come to be accepted as America's Christmas flower.

Christmas greeting-card makers use the poinsettia as freely in their color schemes as they do holly, Christmas trees, or Biblical scenes. Along with holly wreaths and evergreen trees, the potted poinsettia adds its blithesome note to northern florist shops and market stalls about the middle of December. When Christmas is over the poinsettia disappears as suddenly as it came.

Northerners who think of the poinsettia always as a potted plant are generally surprised to find it blossoming profusely in the open in many tropical countries. Even in such sub-tropical regions as Florida, Texas, and southern California the poinsettia is as common a garden flower as the tulip or the iris of northern climes.

Discovered in Mexico

As a recognized flower, however, the poinsettia has a relatively brief history. It first came to the attention of the scientific world in 1828, when Joel Robert Poinsett, American Minister to Mexico from 1825-29, noticed the striking beauty of its scarlet and green head, and the fact that it usually came into blossom about Christmas time.

Poinsett, who was a botanist as well as a diplomat, brought several specimens back with him to this country, and fellow scientists soon learned that the flower would thrive in sub-tropical parts of the United States. Poinsett, a South Carolinian, collected many natural history specimens during his travels and work in foreign countries, presenting most of them to scientific societies in the United States, and enriching the flora of his own colorful South Carolina. To-day, however, he is remembered chiefly for this Christmas flower which bears his name.

The poinsettia, which grows so freely in Mexico that it might almost be considered a national flower, is not confined to that country, but is found also in many parts of South America, Central America, the West Indies, and, more recently as a garden plant, in Bermuda, Texas, Florida, and southern California. Nurseries and scientists have extended the range of the poinsettia to such distant places as the Madeira Islands, the Philippines and Singapore. It is also grown in greenhouses in our northern States and even as far north as Edinburgh, Scotland.

Has Many Other Names

Although the flower is known officially to botanists as *poinsettia pulcherina,* and to the American public at large as poinsettia, it has a number of less familiar aliases, such as: painted leaf, fire plant, *flor de Santa Catarina, pano holandes,* and *flor de Pascua.* The last three are names by which the flower is known in Mexico.

Florists and government scientists in the United States, appreciating the ornamental value of the poinsettia as a Yuletide plant, have studied its growth and needs, and greatly enhanced its beauty, size and hardiness. Poinsettias grow easily from cuttings, and it was found that if the slips were planted during April or May in a sandy soil, later repotted in a richer soil, and kept at a temperature of about 65 degrees F., the plants will bloom late in December.

At first poinsettias were grown in "stoves," built and heated for this purpose; later, with the development of the greenhouse, plants were placed under glass and grown on a large commercial scale. Care must be taken to produce as nearly per-

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green water turns lead color and a sudden wind tosses the lateen sail, they row hastily to shore. Squalls on the Sea of Galilee are treacherous, especially in the afternoon.

Aside from fishing, the chief industry in the vicinity of Tiberias is agriculture. Arabs till the soil with wooden plows, raising wheat, barley, olives, lentils, tobacco, oranges, watermelons, durra and maize, but modern farming machinery has made its appearance in many Zionist villages. Shepherds, from their black goats-hair tents pitched among red poppies on the hillside, watch roaming herds of black-faced sheep.

Legend thrives in Tiberias. One says that "when the Messiah comes, he will rise from the waters of the Sea of Galilee, gather together his people at Tiberias, and proceed with them to Safed, under snow-capped Mount Hermon."

North of Tiberias is the town of Magdala, now a farm colony, but once the watering place where Mary Magdalene walked at sunset. Beyond that is Capernaum where great broken columns overthrown among grasses mark the synagogue where Christ spoke. Between Capernaum and Bethsaida a field of black stones slopes to the water's edge. It was at one time a flower-starred grassy hillside, and is believed by many to be the Mount of the Beatitudes.

Note: Students preparing Christmas projects, or units about the Holy Lands, should also consult: "Changing Palestine," *National Geographic Magazine*, April, 1934; "The Road of the Crusaders," December, 1933; "Crusader Castles of the Near East," March, 1931; "Bethlehem and the Christmas Story," December, 1929; "The Pageant of Jerusalem," December, 1927; "Skirting the Shores of Sunrise," December, 1926; "Among the Bethlehem Shepherds," December, 1926; "Flying over Egypt, Sinai and Palestine," September, 1926; "Sun-Painted Scenes in the Near East," November, 1925; "Adventures with a Camera in Many Lands," July, 1921; "From London to Australia by Aeroplane," March, 1921; "The Last Israelitish Blood Sacrifice," January, 1920; and "An Old Jewel in the Proper Setting," October, 1918.

Bulletin No. 4, December 17, 1934.

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TIBERIAS WAS ONCE A CRUSADER STRONGHOLD

Along its ancient sea wall small boats bob on the sparkling surface of the Sea of Galilee. As the Sea of Galilee is 682 feet below sea level, these tiny craft are floating below the level of the deepest submarine dive. Even in ruins the Crusader Castle (center) resembles the lakeside fortresses of medieval Europe.

fect plants as possible. The temperature in the hothouse must be kept constant, and there must be no jarring to disturb the roots, or the leaves will turn yellow. In order to keep the leaves a dark green, soot is often added to the top soil in which the poinsettia is planted.

The poinsettia is a shrub of the genus *Euphorbia*—a botanical family which has about 750 relatives or species. In Great Britain and temperate North America the *Euphorbia* is represented by the spurge family.

Although the red poinsettia is the most common type in the United States, there are also white and pink varieties in other countries. The bushy plant, as we know it, grows to a height of from three to six feet. Its red leaves are not the real flowers of the plant, but are called the bracts—that is, leaves from whose center or axil the flowers grow. The actual flowers of the poinsettia are small, yellow involucres at the center of the plant.

To us the poinsettia is a decorative Christmas ornament, almost as necessary as tinsel and mistletoe; but to other countries it has had a more practical value. The red leaves were once used by Mexican Indians to make a scarlet dye and as poultices in the treatment of skin infections. The milky white substance, found in the stem of the plant, was also made by them into a soothing medicine.

Note: For a natural-color photograph of a poinsettia in full bloom see "Florida—the Fountain of Youth," *National Geographic Magazine*, January, 1930.

For references to other places where poinsettias grow see: "Southern California at Work," November, 1934; "Haitian Vignettes," October, 1934; "Madeira the Florescent," July, 1934; "Vignettes of Guadalajara (Mexico)," March, 1934; "Cuba—the Isle of Romance," September, 1933; "New World To Explore (British Guiana)," November, 1932; "Army Engineer Explores Nicaragua," May, 1932; "In Humboldt's Wake (Venezuela)," November, 1931; "Hispaniola Rediscovered (Dominican Republic)," January, 1931; "Unexplored Philippines from the Air," September, 1930; "So Big Texas," June, 1928; "Among the Zapotecs of Mexico," May, 1927; "Nicaragua, Largest of Central American Republics," March, 1927; and "Jamaica, the Isle of Many Rivers," January, 1927.

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MEXICO IS RENOWNED AS A LAND OF FLOWERS

To those who know the Latin American republic south of us, it is perhaps no surprise to learn that the poinsettia, America's Christmas flower, was first observed there. Every morning scores of boats bring thousands of gorgeous blossoms from the floating gardens of Xochimilco (pronounced "So-she-*mill*-ko") to the flower markets of the Mexican capital.

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